

GIRARD et al
Serial No. 10/524,138
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AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

The following claim set replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) A biodegradable fibrous support for soil mulching ~~comprising of the soil, the support being provided with a reinforcing means in the form of a grid associated with at least a part of the support, wherein the grid includes threads comprised characterized in that the grid is produced of a biodegradable polymer selected chosen from the group consisting of comprising~~ polylactic acid, polycaprolactone, viscose, modified viscose, polyhydroxybutyrate, and polyhydroxyalcanoate, ~~and mixtures thereof, by themselves or as a mixture, the grid being either maintained on the whole or part of at least one support face, or incorporated into the whole or part of the mass of the support.~~

22. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, ~~wherein characterized in that the grid consists is made exclusively~~ of modified viscose threads.

23. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, ~~wherein characterized in that the weight of the grid is between 10 and 50 g/m², advantageously in the order of 20 g/m².~~

24. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, ~~wherein characterized in that the grid is positioned exclusively in an the area of the fixing points of the support on the ground.~~

25. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, ~~wherein characterized in that the grid is glued directly on the a surface of the fibrous support by means of a water-resistant biodegradable glue which is selected chosen from the group~~

~~comprising consisting of ethylene polyvinyl alcohol (EVOH), and polyvinyl alcohol (PVA), by themselves or as a mixture and mixtures thereof, the glue being present in an amount representing between 5 and 50%, advantageously 15 %, by weight of the grid.~~

26. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, wherein characterized in that the grid is positioned unrolled directly on the fibrous support during its manufacture.

27. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, which further comprises characterized in that it contains thermobonding fibres which are present in an amount representing from 5 to 50%, advantageously between 10 and 15%, by weight of the support.

28. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 27, wherein characterized in that the thermobonding fibres are composed of comprise PLA-fibres.

29. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, which further comprises characterized in that it contains a hydrophobic resin representing from 0,5 in an amount from 0.5 to 15% by weight of the support, wherein the hydrophobic resin is at least one selected chosen from the group consisting of comprising urea-formaldehyde resins, melamine-formaldehyde resins, polyamide-amine-epichlorhydrin resins, polyethyleneimine resins, starch derivatives, by themselves or as a mixture and mixtures thereof.

30. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, which further comprises characterized in that it contains carbon black representing from 0,5 in an amount from 0.5 to 4% by weight of the support.

31. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, which further comprises a coating which is a dried residue of characterized in that it is coated with an

aqueous solution comprising from 5 to 50% by weight of biodegradable natural latex obtained from the rubber tree.

32. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, which further comprises a coating which is a dried residue of characterized in that it is coated with an aqueous solution comprising from 5 to 50% by weight of biodegradable prevulcanized natural latex obtained from the rubber tree.

33. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 32, characterized in that the stabilizing agents further comprising a stabilizing agent which is selected from the group consisting of are chosen from the group comprising the vegetable proteins, (casein, soya protein), the mineral fillers (talc, calcium carbonate), by themselves or as a mixture and mixtures thereof.

34. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 32, characterized in that the preservative agents further comprising a preservative agent which is selected from the group consisting of are chosen from the group comprising the animal proteins, (glycerin), the tannins, the natural colouring agents, indigo, the chitosan, by themselves or as a mixture and mixtures thereof.

35. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 32, wherein the coating is present characterized in that the solution is coated in an amount of 10 to 200 g/m², advantageously between 90 and 100 g/m².

36. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 32, wherein the characterized in that the natural latex (therefore biodegradable) used is obtained from Hevea Brasiliensis and has a dry rubber concentration at least of 60%.

37. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, which comprises characterized in that the fibre composition of the support is as follows: from 40 to 100%

by weight of coniferous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres, and from 0 to 60% by weight of deciduous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres.

38. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, which comprises ~~characterized in that the fibre composition of the support is as follows:~~ from 80 to 100% by weight of annual plant fibres, and from 0 to 20% by weight of coniferous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres.

39. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 21, which comprises ~~characterized in that the fibre composition of the support is as follows:~~ from 20 to 100% by weight of coniferous bleached kraft fibres, from 0 to 40% by weight of annual plant fibres, and from 0 to 40% by weight of rayon fibres.

40. (new) A support according to Claim 23, wherein the weight of the grid is about 20 g/m².

41. (new) A support according to Claim 25, wherein the glue is present in an amount of about 15% by weight of the grid.

42. (new) A support according to Claim 27, wherein the thermobonding fibres are present in an amount between 10 and 15% by weight of the support.

43. (new) A support according to Claim 33, wherein the stabilizing agent comprises casein, soya protein, talc or calcium carbonate.

44. (new) A support according to Claim 34, wherein the preservative agent comprises glycerin or indigo.

45. (new) A support according to Claim 35, wherein the coating is present in an amount of between 90 and 100 g/m².

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46. (new) A support according to claim 21, wherein the grid is associated with at least a part of at least one support face of the support.

47. (new) A support according to claim 46, wherein the grid is associated with the whole of the at least one support face of the support.

48. (new) A support according to claim 21, wherein the grid is incorporated into at least a part of the support.

49. (new) A support according to claim 48, wherein the grid is incorporated into the whole of the support.